

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claim 7 is pending in the present application. In view of the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claim 7 is allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection of Claim 7 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the combination of U.S. Patent No. 4,245,789 ("Gray") and U.S. Patent No. 5,732,888 ("Maier et al."). It is respectfully submitted that the combination of Gray and Maier et al. does not render unpatentable claim 7 for at least the following reasons.

As an initial matter, Applicants respectfully maintain the positions previously set forth in the "Amendment" filed on December 11, 2007.

Applicants again note that claim 7 recites a **plurality** of chromium layers applied to both the armature stop face and the stop face of the inner pole. However, the Final Office Action does not appear to address this limitation. As shown in Figures 2A and 2B, it is this deposition of a plurality of layers that forms the dome-shaped surface-structure. In this regard, there is no apparent reason why one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would apply a plurality of chromium layers to the working gap surfaces of Gray, which discloses surface features formed by a grinding operation. See, e.g., col. 9, lines 16 to 35. Accordingly, there is no apparent rationale in accordance with *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*, 127 S.Ct. 1727, 82 U.S.P.Q.2d 1385 (2007) that would support a finding that this feature is obvious.

Further, Applicants respectfully traverse the allegation that there would have been a motivation to combine and/or modify Gray and Maier as set forth in the Final Office Action. In this regard, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have no reason or motivation to apply **the same coating** to both of the working air gap surfaces of Gray. The surface features of Gray are provide in an attempt to reduce **stiction** and **adhesion**. See, e.g., col. 8, lines 20 to 26. Thus, even assuming, *arguendo*, that there is some motivation to apply a coating to both surfaces, there would be no reason or motivation whatsoever to provide **the same** coating to each of the surfaces, as the coatings would provide surfaces of the **same**

material. Accordingly, there is no apparent rationale in accordance with *KSR* that would support a finding that this feature is obvious.

For at least the reasons set forth above, as well as the reasons set forth in the "Amendment" filed on December 11, 2007, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of Gray and Meier et al. does not render unpatentable claim 7. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: /Clifford A. Ulrich/ (Reg. No. 42,194) for:
Gerard A. Messina
(Reg. No. 35,952)
KENYON & KENYON LLP
One Broadway
New York, NY 10004
Telephone: (212) 425-7200
Facsimile: (212) 425-5288
CUSTOMER NO. 26646